RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

INSPECTOR 345

A LAW AND ORDER PUBLICATION

10¢ CDC NO 3

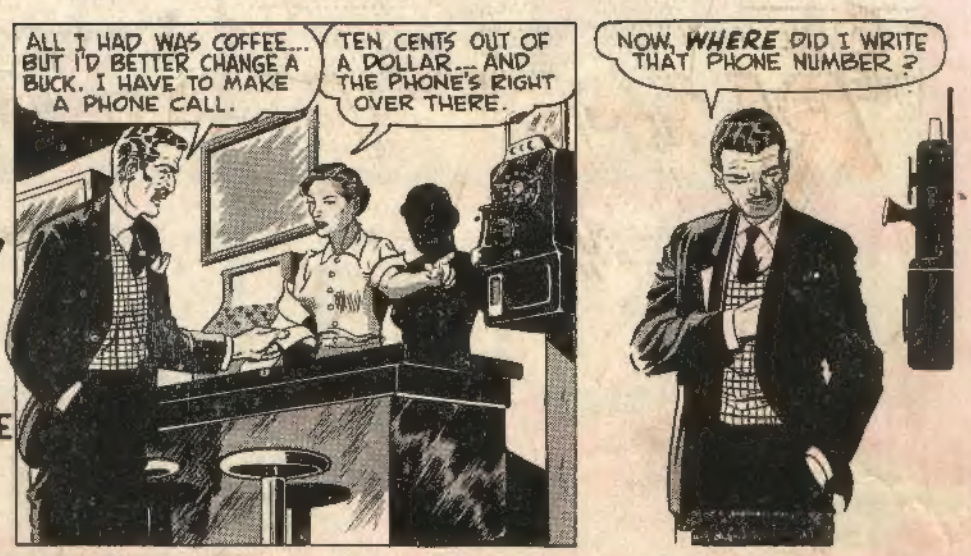
LISTEN... YOU'VE GOT TO GIVE ME $5000 MORE. I'M DOING MY BEST TO KEEP YOUR SECRET QUIET!
$5000...??? BUT I HAVEN'T THAT KIND OF MONEY LEFT!
HMMM... SHE'LL PAY UP... WE'VE GOT HER FRAMED NOW, BUT GOOD!

EXPOSING THE MOST NOTORIOUS OF ALL RACKETS...

THE BLACKMAIL RACKET!

...AND DON'T FORGET THE COFFEE!

ANOTHER SHORT CHANGE GYP...


ALL I HAD WAS COFFEE... BUT I'D BETTER CHANGE A BUCK. I HAVE TO MAKE A PHONE CALL.
TEN CENTS OUT OF A DOLLAR... AND THE PHONE'S RIGHT OVER THERE.
NOW, WHERE DID I WRITE THAT PHONE NUMBER?

WHEN I WROTE DOWN MY MOTHER'S PHONE NUMBER, I HADN'T ANYWHERE TO WRITE IT EXCEPT ON A DOLLAR BILL, SEE IF THERE'S WRITING ON THE ONE I GAVE YOU...

"AND HE WAS SUCH AN HONEST MAN TO REMIND ME ABOUT THE COFFEE...
HEY, WAIT! WHY, THE CHEAP CROOK... I GAVE HIM NINETY CENTS CHANGE TWICE!
THAT'S RIGHT! THE CON MAN TURNED A BUCK INTO $1.80 AND HAD HIS COFFEE TOO!

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GAIL SHELTON NEVER GUESSED SHE WAS A VICTIM OF...

THE BLACKMAIL RACKET

UNTIL SHE TOLD HER STORY TO THE LAW AND FOUND IT IN HER FAVOR!!!

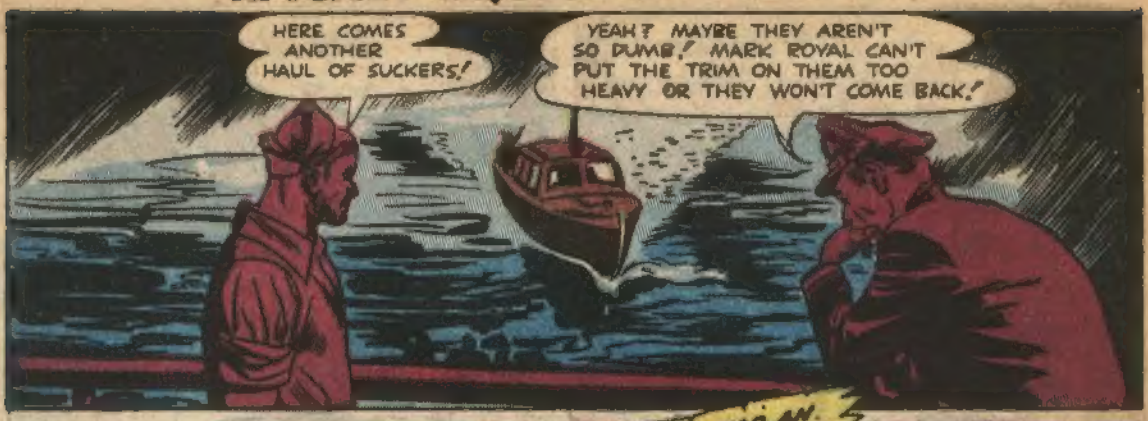
INSPECTOR O'MALLEY

WHEN YOU GET MIXED UP WITH SHADY PEOPLE, THE SHADOWS OFTEN LENGTHEN... AND NEXT THEY GATHER YOU IN! THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED TO GAIL SHELTON, A NICE ENOUGH GIRL WHO HAD SOME BRAINS BUT A LOT MORE MONEY... GAIL THOUGHT IT WAS A LARK TO VISIT MARK ROYAL'S GAMBLING SHIP, THE S.S. **MERRIWETHER**, WHICH WAS MOORED OUT BEYOND THE TWELVE MILE LIMIT... SHE THOUGHT SHE COULD **AFFORD** IT, TOO, IF SHE PLAYED HER CHIPS CAREFULLY... BUT- READ ON!!"

WAIT FOR ME! I'M LITTLE MISS LUCKY... REMEMBER?

WHY, I JUST COULDN'T **AFFORD** TO MISS A TRIP TO THAT DARLING OLD GAMBLING SHIP! I ALMOST ALWAYS WIN! PERHAPS TONIGHT I'LL STRIKE IT RICH!

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION


HERE COMES ANOTHER HAUL OF SUCKERS!
YEAH? MAYBE THEY AREN'T SO DUMB! MARK ROYAL CAN'T PUT THE TRIM ON THEM TOO HEAVY OR THEY WON'T COME BACK!

MARK ROYAL HAD AN EYE ON GAIL SHELTON... TOO CLOSE AN EYE!
HERE'S THAT GAIL SHELTON WE WERE TALKING ABOUT, FRED. TAKE A LOOK AT HER THROUGH THE ONE-WAY MIRROR.

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

I'M PLAYING A SYSTEM MY FATHER USED AT MONTE CARLO. IT'S MATHEMATICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO LOSE... HALF ON THE RED... HALF ON THE ODD.
SINCE YOU'RE SO SURE OF YOURSELF, I'LL MAKE THE SAME PLAY. NOW LET'S SEE THAT SYSTEM CLICK!
NUMBER THIRTEEN! IT'S RED AND ODD BOTH. WE WON DOUBLE THAT TRIP!
I TOLD YOU WE CAN'T LOSE!
LATER...
AM I GLAD I MET YOU, MR. LARCH. WHY, WE PRACTICALLY BROKE THE BANK. BUT AREN'T YOU GOING TO TEACH ME YOUR SYSTEM?
OF COURSE. CASH IN YOUR CHIPS AND WE'LL GO ASHORE.
MEANWHILE...
FRED'S TIPPING US OFF THAT THE DAME FELL FOR HIS LINE. THE NEXT ACT WILL BE UP AT HIS PLACE AND YOU WILL BE IN IT, ZIGGY!
OKAY, ROYAL. I'LL BE THERE!
YOUR FATHER MUST HAVE BEEN A MATHEMATICAL WIZARD.
HE WAS. BUT STILL IT TOOK ME THREE YEARS TO TEST OUT THE SYSTEM.

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

YOU SEE, IT ALL DEPENDS ON THE LAW OF PERMUTATIONS...
THE WHICH? COME AGAIN, PLEASE?
HERE, LET'S GRAB THIS CAB AND GO UP TO MY PLACE. I HAVE MY OWN ROULETTE WHEEL THERE AND IT'S EASIER TO DEMONSTRATE THE SYSTEM THAN TO EXPLAIN IT.
I KEEP THE WHEEL HERE IN MY TROPHY ROOM...
WHY, WHAT A WONDERFUL LOT OF SWORDS AND SPEARS. BUT DON'T YOU GO IN FOR GUNS AT ALL?
OH, YES, I HAVE QUITE A FEW GUNS, BUT THEY'RE ALL STORED AWAY EXCEPT THIS ANTIQUE PISTOL. DON'T TOUCH IT! IT'S LOADED!
NOW ABOUT THE SYSTEM. YOU KEEP TAB. WHILE I SPIN THE WHEEL WHATEVER COMES UP, WE ALWAYS BET THE SAME ON THE NEXT PLAY.
ODD AND BLACK, SO WE BET THOSE. SO IF EITHER IS DUE FOR A LONG RUN, WE'LL BE WITH IT...
FRED!!! LOOK OUT!

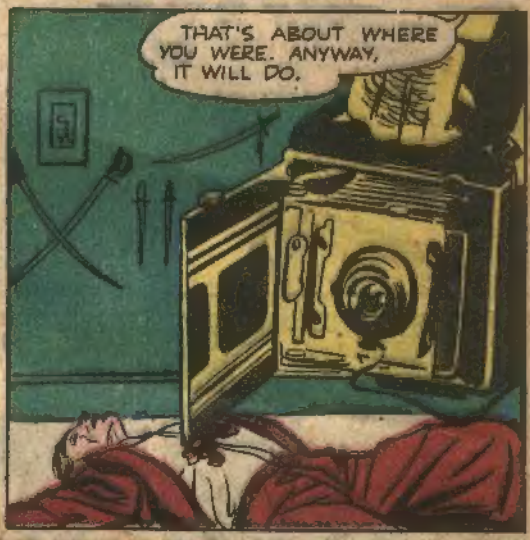
RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

I'LL HANDLE THIS, GAIL! STAY OUT OF IT!
THIS IS A STICK-UP, BUD!
DROP THAT GUN OF YOURS, THIS INSTANT, OR I'LL... I'LL...
I'LL SHOOT!
WHAT... WHAT'S HAPPENED, GAIL?
OH, FRED... I'VE SHOT THIS MAN... AND I THINK I'VE KILLED HIM!
YES, HE'S DEAD ALL RIGHT, THE RAT! HERE GAIL, GIVE ME THAT GUN, AND GO GET YOUR THINGS. I'LL GET YOU OUT OF HERE AND HANDLE THIS MATTER MYSELF!

BUT FRED, I CAN'T LET YOU TAKE THE BLAME...
I SAID I'LL HANDLE THIS, GAIL, SO ABOVE ALL, DON'T MAKE A SCENE. NOBODY MUST KNOW THAT YOU WERE HERE!
HOTEL

AS SOON AS GAIL WAS GONE, FRED WENT BACK UPSTAIRS AND FOUND A VERY HEALTHY DEAD MAN WAITING TO GREET HIM?!?!
HI, FRED! I GUESS MY DIVE CONVINCED THE DAME THAT SHE'D REALLY CROAKED ME, HUH? THOSE BLANK BULLETS SURE SOUND REAL.

BOY, WHEN I PRESSED THE BULB, THAT KETCHUP WAS SLOW SQUIRTING. WELL, I CAN PITCH THIS SHIRT NOW, HUH?
WAIT, ZIGGY, YOU FOOL! WE NEED PICTURES!



A FEW DAYS PASSED AND ALL SEEMED CALM. THEN GAIL RECEIVED A TELE-PHONE CALL WHICH DID MORE THAN STARTLE HER... IT SHOOK HER?!?!

WHAT'S THAT... A DEAD MAN? BUT I... I DON'T KNOW ABOUT A DEAD MAN...
YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS DEAD MAN, SISTER, AND HE'S THE KIND THAT WILL TELL TALES IF YOU DON'T COUGH UP FIVE GRAND!

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS... WELL, I CAN AFFORD IT, I GUESS! ANYWAY, IT MEANS THE END OF THIS HORRIBLE MESS...
NATIONAL BANK
BUT IT WASN'T THE END... IT WAS JUST THE START! A WEEK LATER, GAIL WAS TAPPED FOR ANOTHER $5,000 AND THE NEXT WEEK THERE WAS A DEMAND FOR $10,000... THAT WAS TOO MUCH...
FRED, I MUST TALK TO YOU. IT'S MORE THAN URGENT. IT... IT'S CRITICAL!
TAKE IT EASY, GAIL. UNTIL WE GET UPSTAIRS!
YOU MUST HAVE TOLD SOMEBODY, FRED... BECAUSE I HAVE BEEN BLACKMAILED FOR $10,000 ALREADY!
I HAVEN'T TOLD ANYONE! OF COURSE I HAD TO PAY A MAN TO REMOVE THE BODY...
AND HE MIGHT HAVE SEEN THIS SCARF YOU LEFT IN YOUR HURRY. THEN OF COURSE, THERE WAS THE DOOR MAN... AND THE CABBY...
DON'T GO ON, FRED! I'D BETTER PAY!
LATER...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE SHELTON DAME. SHE'LL LEAVE THE TEN GRAND WHERE YOU TOLD HER...
SHE'S ALREADY LEFT IT. NOW SHE'S READY FOR A BIG TRIM... WITH ZIGGY'S PICTURE IF WE NEED IT.
ANOTHER WEEK AND THE "BITE" REALLY CAME! THE VOICE THAT TALKED ACROSS THE PHONE TO GAIL DEMANDED A FLAT $25,000 WITHIN TEN DAYS... OR ELSE?!?!
TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND... BUT I... DON'T HAVE THAT KIND OF MONEY!
YOU KNOW WHERE TO GET IT AND THAT'S WHAT COUNTS! WHEN I CALL AGAIN IT WILL BE FINAL!

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

I WANT TO SELL MY SHORE PROPERTY RIGHT AWAY, UNCLE BEN! I.. WELL I NEED MONEY..
ARE YOU CRAZY, GAIL? WHY, YOU NEED MONEY LIKE A HOLE IN YOUR HEAD!
DON'T .. DON'T SAY THAT! IT SOUNDS .. LIKE MURDER.. AND THAT'S WHAT I'M GUILTY OF! MURDER!
GET COHERENT, GAIL! WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?
WE'VE CHECKED ALL THE NEWSPAPERS AND THERE'S NOTHING ABOUT A MURDER, A MISSING PERSON, OR EVEN AN ACCIDENT THAT COULD BE BLAMED ON YOU. WE'RE TAKING THIS TO THE POLICE!
NO, NO, UNCLE BEN!
A FEW DAYS LATER
UNCLE BEN WON OUT. WHEN HE AND GAIL CAME TO MY OFFICE THEIR STORY HAD A FAMILIAR RING WITH ALL THE EAR-MARKS OF AN OLD RACKET. THERE WAS ONE WAY TO BLOCK IT. I SPOTTED THAT, TOO...
ABOUT THAT CASH, MISS SHELTON..
THIS IS IT NOW!
GOOD. I'LL GET TO THE CUT-IN!
START OUT WITH THE MONEY ALONE, TAKE THE FIRST CAB YOU SEE. IF YOU'RE FOLLOWED IT'S ALL OFF! CLICK!
A VERY FAMILIAR VOICE!
WE COULD GUESS WHO IS BEHIND THE GAME, BUT I WANT PROOF. I'M ASSIGNING STEVE PRYOR, MY BEST MAN, TO CHECK THAT FINAL PHONE CALL WHEN IT COMES!
THIS IS STEVE PRYOR, FROM HEADQUARTERS.
YES, MR. PRYOR. WE'VE CHECKED THE NUMBER FOR YOU. THE CALL CAME FROM SYCAMORE 6-8324

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

YEAH, BOSS. . SHE WILL BE THERE IF YOU NEED ME, I'M HERE AT MAC'S POOL ROOM .. SYCAMORE 6-8324
I THOUGHT I KNEW YOUR VOICE, ZIGGY.'.. AND YOU ANSWER A DESCRIPTION OF A VERY MYSTERIOUS DEAD MAN:..
I'LL GET YOU, PRYOR
JUST PLAY DEAD AGAIN, ZIGGY HERE'S A HELP TOWARD IT
STEVE BROUGHT ZIGGY TO MY OFFICE AND VERY SOON HE WAS A SINGING CANARY- AFTER ALL, IT WASN'T HARD TO CONVINCE HIM THAT HE'D LOSE MORE IF HE DIDN'T TALK THAN IF HE DID!
WE'VE GOT PLENTY TO HOLD YOU ON, ZIGGY, SO YOU'LL MISS YOUR PAY-OFF FROM ROYAL. IF YOU HELP US NOW, YOU MAY GET CLEMENCY...
OKAY I'LL TELL YOU WHERE ROYAL WILL BE PICKING UP THE DOUGH
AN HOUR LATER..
CAB!
YOU UNDERSTAND, LADY, A GUY CALLED ME UP AND OFFERED ME THIS HAUL. NOW UNLESS IT'S ALL RIGHT WITH YOU...
IT'S ALL RIGHT WITH ME

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

HI, ROYAL! I THOUGHT WE'D BE MEETING UP!
I SAID... LAY OFF!
ROYAL WHAT'S THE HURRY? WAIT UP. I'VE GOT MY DOUGH COMING
FRED, YOU FOOL.. LAY OFF ME!
10

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

YOU SEE WHAT ROYAL GAVE YOU? THE DOUBLE-CROSS. HE OWES ME DOUGH TOO!
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, BUT YOU CAN GET ROYAL WHEN HE CUTS BACK TO THE INDIA WHARF. THAT'S WHERE HIS BOAT IS!
TAKE CARE OF THIS PRISONER, RILEY! I'LL BE WAITING FOR ROYAL.
POLICE! WAS I DUMB!
WHAT'S THE HURRY THIS TIME, ROYAL?
YOU AGAIN, COPPER? I'LL FIX YOU!
YOU'LL STILL NEED ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY, ROYAL!
THE MONEY... TWENTY-FIVE GRAND... IT'S FLOATING AWAY!
LOOK CLOSER, ROYAL. IT ISN'T MONEY. THAT PACKAGE WAS ALL BLANKS.
EVERY STEP OF YOUR UGLY RACKET HAS BEEN TRACED... AND THESE PICTURES, INSTEAD OF AIDING YOU IN BLACKMAIL, WILL PROVE THE STRONGEST EVIDENCE IN CONVICTING YOU!
THAT FINISHED THE BLACKMAIL GAME... AND IF ALL VICTIMS OF SUCH RACKETS WOULD SPEAK UP, THE LAW COULD GET RID OF LEECHES LIKE THOSE WHOSE SHINOLE YOU HAVE JUST WITNESSED!
J.J. O'Malley
THE END

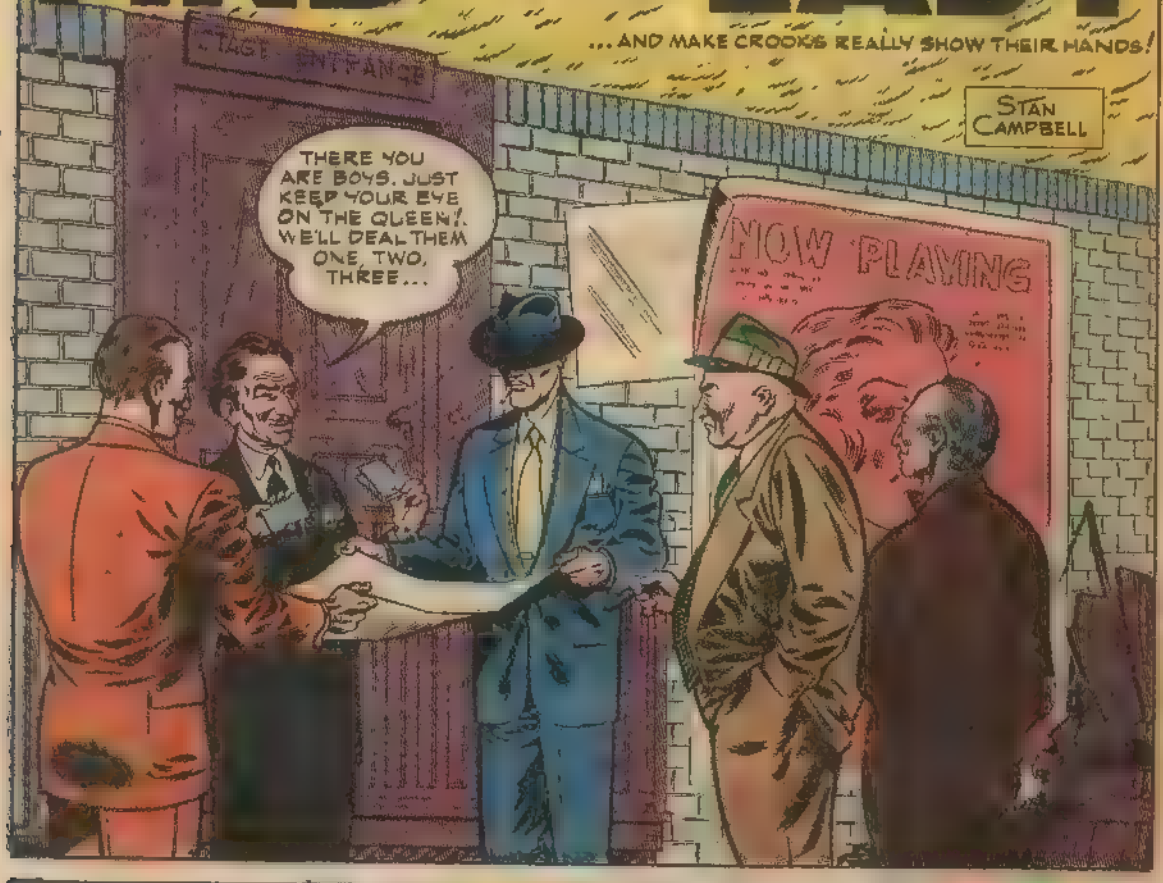
RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

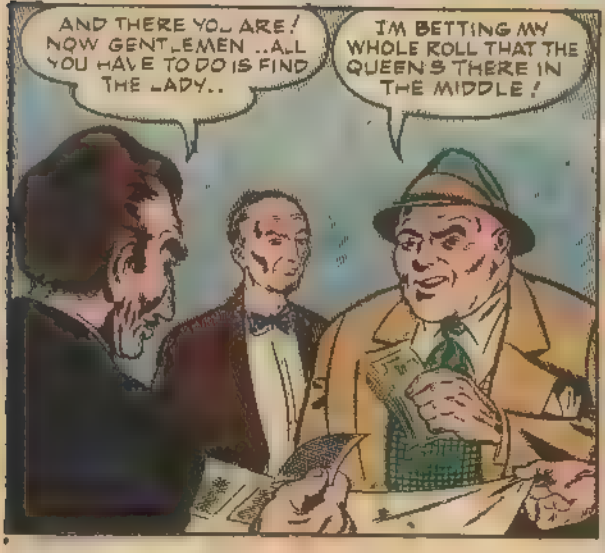
NOBODY COULD BEAT FRISCO PARRY AT THE FAMOUS GAME OF "THREE CARD MONTE" UNTIL POLICE INSPECTOR J.J. O'MALLEY DECIDED TO...

FIND THE LADY

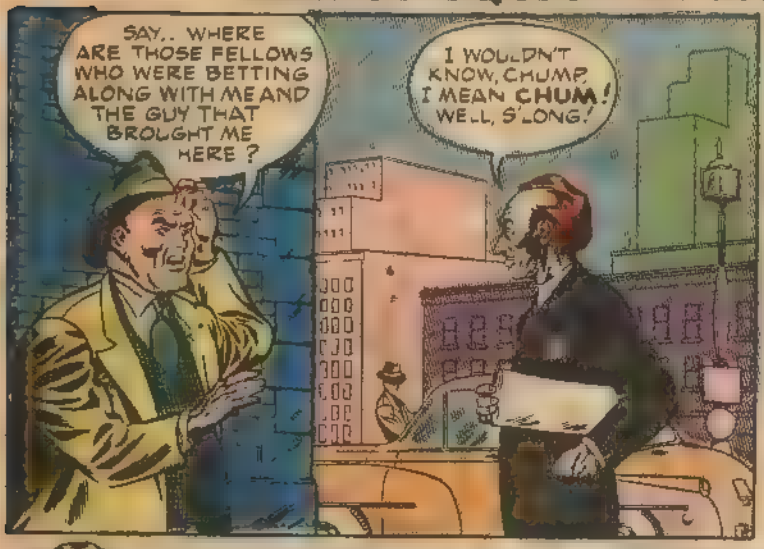
...AND MAKE CROOKS REALLY SHOW THEIR HANDS!

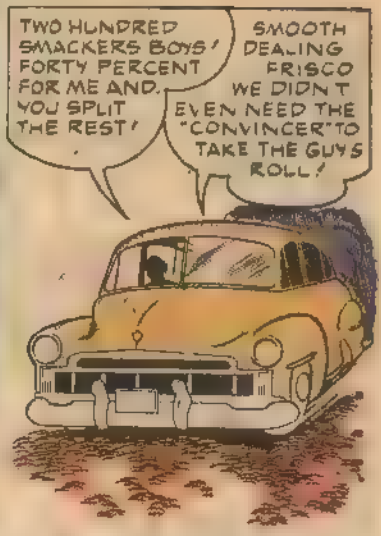
STAN CAMPBELL




AND THERE YOU ARE! NOW GENTLEMEN ..ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS FIND THE LADY..
I'M BETTING MY WHOLE ROLL THAT THE QUEEN'S THERE IN THE MIDDLE!

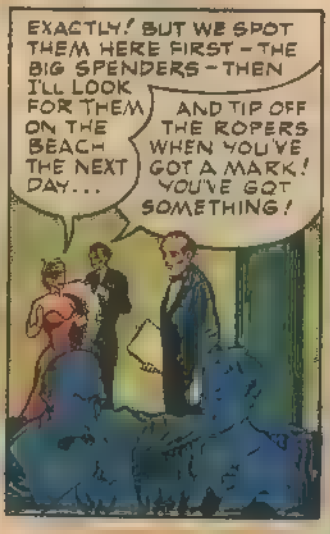
RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION


SAY.. WHERE ARE THOSE FELLOWS WHO WERE BETTING ALONG WITH ME AND THE GUY THAT BROUGHT ME HERE ?
I WOULDN'T KNOW, CHUMP. I MEAN CHUM! WELL, S'LONG!

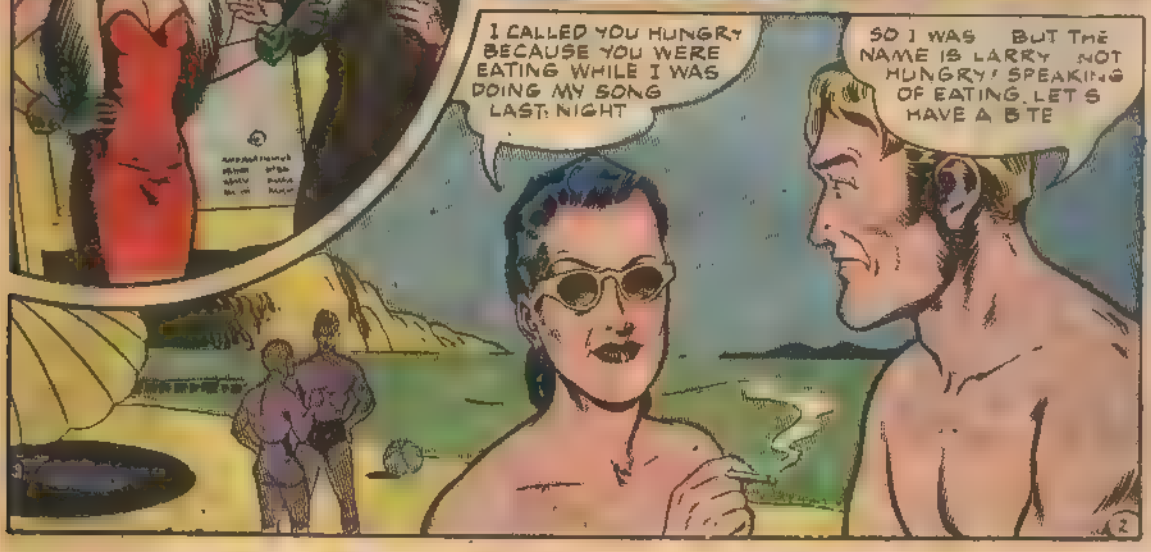

TWO HUNDRED SMACKERS BOYS! FORTY PERCENT FOR ME AND. YOU SPLIT THE REST!
SMOOTH DEALING FRISCO WE DIDN'T EVEN NEED THE "CONVINCER" TO TAKE THE GUYS ROLL!

"BUT FRISCO FARRY DIDN'T FIND EVERYTHING RUNNING AS SMOOTHLY AS HIS MONTE GAME...

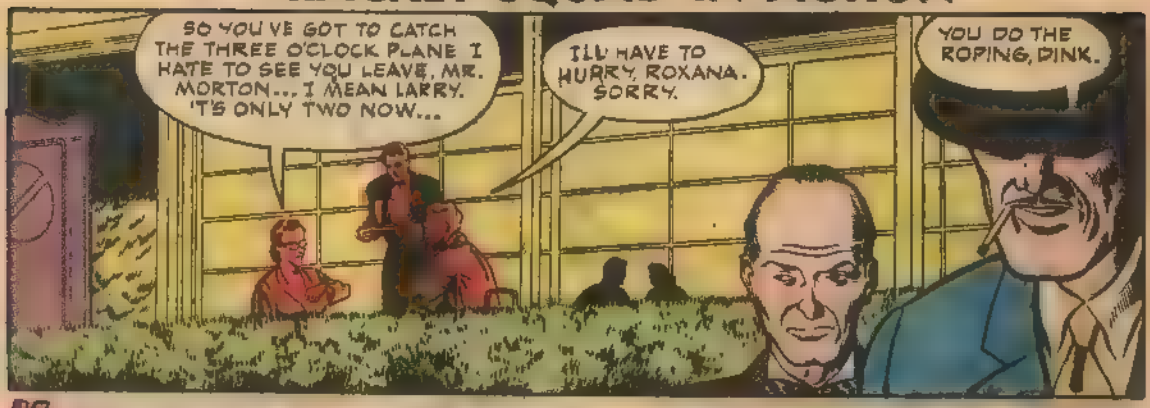
SO! WHEN YOU DO TAKE A CHUMP IT'S ONLY FOR A HUNDRED BUCKS OR SO! WHY DON'T YOU AND YOUR MONTE MOB GO IN FOR REAL SUCKERS?
A GOOD IDEA, ROXANA. BUT WHERE DO WE FIND THEM? LYING AROUND ON THE BEACH?
CLUB CAVORTE

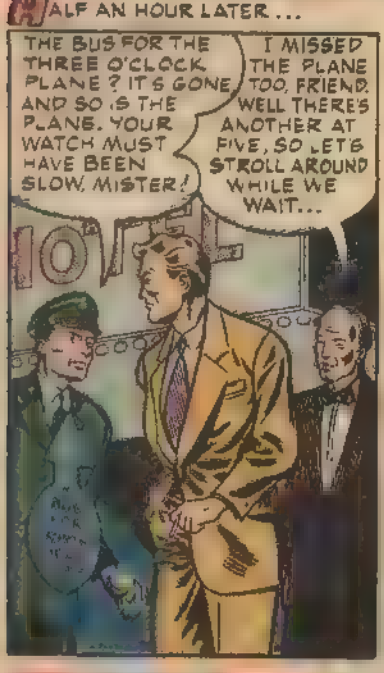

EXACTLY! BUT WE SPOT THEM HERE FIRST - THE BIG SPENDERS - THEN I'LL LOOK FOR THEM ON THE BEACH THE NEXT DAY...
AND TIP OFF THE ROPERS WHEN YOU'VE GOT A MARK! YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING!

A FEW DAYS LATER.


I CALLED YOU HUNGRY BECAUSE YOU WERE EATING WHILE I WAS DOING MY SONG LAST NIGHT
SO I WAS BUT THE NAME IS LARRY NOT HUNGRY! SPEAKING OF EATING, LET'S HAVE A BITE

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION


SO YOU'VE GOT TO CATCH THE THREE O'CLOCK PLANE I HATE TO SEE YOU LEAVE, MR. MORTON... I MEAN LARRY. IT'S ONLY TWO NOW...
I'LL HAVE TO HURRY, ROXANA. SORRY.
YOU DO THE ROPING, DINK.


HALF AN HOUR LATER...
THE BUS FOR THE THREE O'CLOCK PLANE? IT'S GONE AND SO IS THE PLANE. YOUR WATCH MUST HAVE BEEN SLOW, MISTER!
I MISSED THE PLANE TOO, FRIEND. WELL THERE'S ANOTHER AT FIVE, SO LET'S STROLL AROUND WHILE WE WAIT...

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

WHILE LARRY DISTRACTS FRISCO'S ATTENTION, DINK QUICKLY LEANS OVER THE CARDS AND BENDS UP ONE CORNER OF THE QUEEN . .
A CIGARETTE? I WOULDN'T MIND ONE, PAL. AFTER ALL, WE'RE JUST MATCHING WITS... AND WE CAN BOTH BE GOOD LOSERS, RIGHT?
RIGHT!
WE CAN BET ALL THE BOODLE IN OUR BUNDLES THIS TIME. I BENT THE CORNER OF THE QUEEN!
AND THE SKY IS THE LIMIT... JUST FIND THE LADY...
THIS? THE QUEEN? WHY NO... INDEED NO! I'LL TAKE THAT MONEY, PAL...
BUT... BUT I SAW..
COME BACK HERE, YOU... YOU CROOKS!!
GET GOING... AND FAST! WE REALLY TOOK THAT CHARACTER!
LATER... AT THE CLUB CAVORTE...
ONE THOUSAND... JUST FOR YOUR SHARE! WELL, I TOLD YOU HE WAS WELL HEELED! BUT WHAT IF HE COMES BACK HERE?
HE WON'T! HE HASN'T ANY DOUGH LEFT TO BLOW IN A CLIP JOINT LIKE THIS...
'FRISCO WAS RIGHT... LARRY MORTON WAS SO SHORT ON CASH HE COULDN'T EVEN GET OUT OF TOWN. THAT'S WHY HE CAME TO MY OFFICE...
I'M GLAD YOU CAME HERE, MORTON. USUALLY VICTIMS OF THE MONTE GAME FEEL TOO EMBARRASSED TO TELL THEIR STORY.
THEY PICKED ME SO CLEAN, INSPECTOR THAT I'D BE ARRESTED FOR VAGRANCY IF I DIDN'T MAKE A COMPLAINT. SO I'M MAKING ONE...

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

"IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN EASY TO TRACK DOWN A MONTE MOB IN A RESORT TOWN LIKE SEAVIEW BEACH... BUT MY BEST OPERATIVE, STEVE PRYOR KEPT DRAWING BLANKS UNTIL...
YOU'VE BEEN ON IT A WEEK, STEVE, AND IN THE MEANTIME FOUR MORE VICTIMS HAVE BEEN TAKEN... ALL FOR LARGE AMOUNTS. HERE'S THE LATEST... MR RALPH HARDY...
I JUST DON'T GET IT... WHO ROPED YOU MR HARDY?
A TOTAL STRANGER! I'M SURE HE WASN'T AT THE CLUB CAVORTE LAST NIGHT, NOR ON THE BEACH TODAY WHEN I MET ROXANA DELL, WHO SINGS AT THE CLUB...
NEVER MIND ALL THAT... LET'S JUMP AHEAD TO THE MONTE MOB.
WAIT STEVE! LET'S GO BACK INSTEAD! THE MONTE DEALERS' SLOGAN IS "FIND THE LADY"... AND THAT'S WHAT WE'LL DO SHE COULD HAVE SPOTTED MR HARDY'S BANKROLL FOR THE MOB!
"THAT NIGHT I HAD STEVE PRYOR FLASH A SIZEABLE ROLL AT THE CLUB CAVORTE .. PART CLEARLY FOR THE BENEFIT OF ROXANA DELL...
WHY-Y-Y AM I BL-L-J-UE...
CHANGE FOR THIS FIFTY, WAITER...
AND THE NEXT DAY ON THE BEACH WE FOUND THE LADY. .AS I EXPECTED .
HI, HANDSOME! WEREN'T YOU AROUND THE CLUB CAVORTE LAST NIGHT?
WHY.. WHY YES
STAY WITH STEVE I'LL HANDLE THE GIRL...
LATER..
A POLICE INSPECTOR! WHY, I HAVEN'T DONE A THING...
THAT WELL FIND OUT WHEN WE BRING IN YOUR FRIENDS!

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

THEY ROPED STEVE AND WE'VE SPOTTED A GETAWAY CAR WAITING FOR THE MONTE MOB.
PICK UP THE DRIVER AND NAB THE REST LATER.
NATURALLY STEVE PLAYED THE PERFECT FALL GUY EVEN BITING FOR THE BENT CORNER "CONVINCER"... UNTIL IT CAME TIME TO PAY OFF...
THE QUEEN? NO, IT'S JUST A SPOT CARD YOU LOSE CHUM.
WAIT I'VE SOMETHING MORE FOR YOU..
THESE!
COP! BEAT IT, BOYS!
GOING SOME PLACE?
COPS! THEY'VE GRABBED OUR GETAWAY CAR..!
LATER..
YOU'RE A BIT DUMB YOURSELF, ROXANA.. ALL WE WANTED TO HEAR YOU SAY WAS THAT YOU KNOW THIS CROOK!
WHY YOU DUMB CLUCK! GETTING YOURSELF NABBED...
I'LL ADMIT EVERYTHING ON THE CHANCE IT WILL GO EASIER WITH ME. JUST LET ME SHOW YOU HOW I DID THE DEAL...
GO RIGHT AHEAD, FRISCO

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

FIRST YOU SHOW THE QUEEN... THE BOTTOM CARD OF THE TWO IN YOUR RIGHT HAND.
THEN YOU SPREAD YOUR FINGERS SO THE SPOT CARD FALLS INSTEAD OF THE QUEEN...
YOU DROP THE LEFT HAND CARD AT ONE END, THE QUEEN AT THE OTHER, SO THEY THINK THEY'LL "FIND THE LADY" IN THE CENTER.
ALL RIGHT, FRISCO. NOW TELL US ABOUT YOUR CONVINCER.
AFTER THE SHILL TURNS UP A CORNER OF THE QUEEN, YOU TURN IT DOWN... AND TURN UP A CORNER OF A SPOT CARD, ALL AT THE SAME TIME.
SO IT STILL WON'T BE THE QUEEN WHEN THE CHUMP TURNS IT UP!
ALL RIGHT TAKE HIM AWAY...
SO THAT'S HOW THE MONTE MOB OPERATES. FRISCO THOUGHT WE COULDN'T FIND THE LADY... BUT WE DID!
AND YOU HAPPEN TO BE THE LADY THE INSPECTOR MEANS.
OKAY COPPER YOU WIN!
THE END

DON'T BE A SUCKER

"To my knowledge," stated Griff the Grifter, "there is just one thing on the carnival lot that isn't gaffed — and that thing is the Ferris Wheel. But" — he added this with a solemn nod "if anbody asked me to bet a buck on which car would be at the bottom of the Ferris Wheel when it stops, I wouldn't take a chance. I'd know then that somebody had figured a gaff for the thing. Otherwise, nobody would be offering to put up moola."

"Ever hear of a racket?" queried Griff. "Well, the carnival biz is the original racket. Back when I first came with it — that's going oh forty years now — we used to say 'He's in the racket' whenever we referred to another carney.

We went along. A blatant cry greeted us: "Pop 'em in the bucket! Pop 'em in the bucket!" The bucket in question was slanted in back of a counter that was stocked with cheap baseballs and the idea very obviously was to toss a ball into the bucket without having it bounce out. There were three of these buckets in a line and three players were trying to sink baseballs with easy, underhand lobs.

So easy, you just couldn't miss.

That was how it looked, but not how it worked out. The players were placing them in the buckets, but the balls wouldn't stay. Always one popped out, usually the third and last. "Too bad," the grifter behind the counter would say "Close, but no cigar! No prize this time, but better luck next time!" Only next time, the player invariably missed one ball again.

"I do not have to be a mind reader," declared Griff as he led us on our way, "to reveal your thoughts concerning the bucket game. You are thinking that the player must get nervous on the final ball and that is why he misses."

"The truth is," stated Griff, "that the operator gets careful. He steps on a pedal alongside the bucket platform and a second bottom presses up against the bucket. The double bottom is tight as a drum and a ball is sure to bounce out when it hits there. Cute, the way the grifter stands close to root that last ball home, like he really wanted the chump to win for once. He has to stand close to step on the gaff."

Griff stopped next at a counter where players were taking turns bombarding a big stuffed tomcat that was perched on a stand near the back canvas. Every now and then, somebody scored a direct hit that flattened the huge cat, but nobody seemed to win. The reason was soon explained.

"Gotta knock him off!" the operator shrilled. "Gotta knock Big Tom off the stand! Here, grandpop" — he trust a ball into Griff's hand — "you look like an old time ball player. Why don't you try? This one's on the house."

Griff sighted on Big Tom, winged a swift pitch that caught the stuffed cat amidships and knocked it clear of the stand. By the time the object landed on the ground, the concession was doing a land office business. Players were buying throws on a three-for-a-quarter basis, all sure they could emulate the speed and skill of an old codger like Griff.

They were knocking Big Tom over when we left, but still nobody but Griff could sweep him off the perch. Griff told us why, when we were safely along the Midway.

"The cat is weighted at the bottom," Griff explained, "so heavily that you can knock it down, but never off."

"Never off? But you knocked it off."

"Never off," repeated Griff. "If the cat is set where it should be, against a pin at the front of the shelf. But to encourage trade, the operator sometimes sets the cat at a spot a few inches back. Then, when you knock it down, it will topple off the back of the shelf, since it is overbalanced."

"Then the operator recognized you and set the gaff for you to win?"

"You are catching on quickly, chump," expressed Griff. "Excuse me, I mean chum. Yes, like the Bucket Game, Big Tom is tried and true. When a game never grows old, you know it's got something. Still, new ones do keep cropping up. I'll show you."

Griff took us to a most curious contrivance. Behind a counter was a large pedestal from which a stream of air blew steadily upward, keeping a hundred or more ping-pong balls floating in constant circulation. The thing was fascinating to watch, the balls being literally balanced on the continual current. However, since they were always getting in each other's way, the result was a swirl in which balls would drop down into a vortex, then get blown up again. Hence the whole mass was in a haphazard, ever-shifting formation.

The coy girl behind the counter took a net and dipped it into a whirl of balls. The net was transparent, so you saw that it went in empty before it came out bringing a ball. The girl took the ball from the net, showed a number that was stamped on it. She smiled.

"See how lucky I am?" The girl said. "Number Nine. That's one of the low numbers" — she gestured to a chart — "and you'd have gotten a big prize if you'd picked this ball. Why don't you try?"

Griff nodded, so we tried, after the girl had tossed the Nine Ball back into the swirl. But every ball we netted — at a dime a ball — had a number higher than ten. Those high numbers just didn't count. We couldn't even win a tin whistle.

"Don't tell us that game is gaffed, Griff," we argued as we walked away. "It was just bad luck. The girl picked a good one, only we didn't."

"That," stated Griff, "was skill — not chance."

"You mean it wasn't a game of chance?"

"The Blower, as it is familiarly known," declared Griff, "is not a game of chance, because the customer has no chance. Behind the counter, the girl was able to dip down deep into the whirl of ping-pong balls. That's where the low numbers stay."

"You mean they don't blow as high as the bigger numbers? Why not, Griff?"

"Because, my boy, they are previously treated with a hypodermic syringe. Not doped in the usual fashion, though they are given a shot of mercury, which allows them to balance and behave normally in the air-current — except that they keep low. Low numbers — stay low! Then the simps can't reach them."

Griff was still chuckling over the Blower and its ways when we stopped beside a platform where customers were tossing dimes on cigarette packs that were lying there. All the packs were of the sort that had a big printed circle on the side. The object was to land a coin there.

"Here's your chance to be lucky!" the grifter told the customers. "Get your cigarettes at a dime a carton! Lay a dime completely in the circle and win a carton of cigarettes."

Those dimes just wouldn't stay in the circle. Always, they slid over the edge and a good many of them flopped off the pack entirely. The platform was nearly carpeted with dimes when we left.

"A nice gaff," nodded Griff, approvingly. "Sort of factory-made. Whoever invented cellophane must have wanted to help out the carney grifters. There's just too much slide; a dime never will stop inside the circle."

As a contrast between the new and old, Griff steered us to another cigarette game, one we'd often seen before. Packs of cigarettes were stand on little glass shelves and the game was to knock them off with corks fired from a pop-gun.

We tried our marksmanship and missed with surprising regularity. Just as you'd get the feel of a gun, you'd find your aim was off worse than ever. The corks varied in weight, but after you'd caught onto that, you still couldn't score many hits. At last Griff gave the operator a wink.

"Hold the gun away from you," Griff suggested, "and then look straight along the barrel."

You could see it easily. Somebody had put the gun in a vise and bent the barrel ever so slightly. What it did to your aim was plenty. The better the marksman, the more it hurt.

"And that," Griff decided, "is the neatest gaff along the Midway."

We'd found out one thing from old Griff, the Grifter. The more you see of carnival games, the more you recognize the odds against you. Don't be deceived by occasional winners. They are almost invariably shills, working with the concessions.

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

MY NAME IS SIDNEY RADNER AND I COVER THE COUNTRY EXPOSING CROOKED GAMBLERS THEY'RE FOUND EVERYWHERE, EVEN IN BOWLING ALLEYS WHICH ARE LITERALLY ON THE LEVEL... AND HERE IS HOW SUCH CROOKS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HONEST BOWLERS... THE STORY OF TWO GAMBLERS, TIM AGNEW AND JERRY GREBB..
GAMBLERS NEVER GAMBLE. THEY PREFER SURE MONEY WHEN MAKING A BET. THEIR MOTTO IS..
HOOK LINE and SUCKER!
THAT RAY DOZO SURE LOOKS LIKE THE COMING CHAMP, JERRY. THERE HE GOES WITH ANOTHER STRIKE!
YEAH TIM BUT I'M MORE INTERESTED IN HIS WIND-UP WATCH WHEN HE BOWLS AGAIN!
SEE HOW HE STARTS CLEAR BACK AT THOSE CHAIRS? WHY, HE'D BE SITTING IN OUR LAPS IF WE WERE THERE!
I GET IT JERRY LET'S GO AND PUT SOME DOUGH ON THE BIG MATCH

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

...RE PUTTING UP A FEW CENTURIES FOR RAY DOZO TO WIN THE BOWLING MATCH THAT'S OFFICIAL . UNDERSTAND?
BUT HERE'S A COUPLE OF GRAND AGAINST DOZO, MARGE ONLY LIST IT UNDER THESE PHONEY NAMES
THE NIGHT OF THE BIG MATCH
HI, DOZO BOY! WE ARRANGED TO GET THESE SEATS SO WE COULD BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU!
I COULDN'T WANT ANY BETTER I HEAR YOU BOYS HAVE MONEY ON ME.
WATCH THIS TEN STRIKE, FELLOWS! I'M IN FETTLE FOR THIS MATCH!
YOU'RE DOING GREAT, DOZO! EVEN A COUPLE OF SPARES WILL CINCH THIS GAME!
DOING OKAY, EH?
BUT SOMETHING BEGAN TO GO WRONG WITH DOZO'S GAME...
HE MUST'VE GONE OFF STRIDE! HE HASN'T MADE A STRIKE IN THE LAST THREE FRAMES!
2

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

NOW DOZO CAN'T EVEN MAKE A SPARE!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GETTING ME, BOYS. I JUST SEEM TO LOSE STRIDE...
TAKE IT EASY. YOU'LL PULL THROUGH
OOOPS! I MUST HAVE SLIPPED!
THERE GOES THE MATCH!
AT FIVE TO ONE AGAINST DOZO YOU **REALLY** TOOK THE BOOKIES UNDER THOSE PHONEY NAMES YOU USED.
RIGHT. AND HERE'S A LITTLE SWEETENING FOR YOU, SUGAR, JUST TO FORGET IT!
THESE LEECHES DIDN'T CARE IF THEY RUINED RAY DOZO AS A BOWLER... THEY KEPT ON BETTING AGAINST HIM SECRETLY AND CROWDING HIM WITH THE CHAIR TRICK UNTIL HE WAS NO LONGER USEFUL TO THEM AND THEN-
A GRAND AGAINST HOOK MORGAN... ON THE Q.T. OF COURSE.
AGAINST HOOK MORGAN. . WHY HE'S SURE TO WIN THAT MATCH AT THE CAPITOL TONIGHT
NO HE WON'T. WE WERE THERE THIS AFTERNOON, **AHEAD** OF HIM!
THAT NIGHT
HOOK MORGAN DOESN'T HAVE HIS FAMOUS HOOK TONIGHT!

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

THE FAMOUS HOOK MORGAN WAS STARTING THE DOWN-GRADE LIKE RAT DOZO WHEN I ARRIVED IN TOWN AND GAVE A LECTURE ON GAMBLING AT ONE OF THE SERVICE CLUBS.
A GREAT TALK, SID! MAYBE YOU CAN SOLVE A LOCAL MYSTERY SOMEBODY SEEMS TO BE PUTTING THE FIX ON THE BOWLING MATCHES THERE'S A MATCH TONIGHT IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO LOOK IN
I CERTAINLY WOULD!
THAT'S HOOK MORGAN HE DEPENDS ON A TERRIFIC HOOK SHOT DOWN THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE ALLEY..
ONLY HIS HOOK HASN'T BEEN WORKING LATELY SEE WHAT I MEAN? COULD HOOK BE THROWING THESE GAMES?
LET'S FIND OUT WHO HAS BEEN BETTING AGAINST HIM!
TIM AGNEW AND JERRY GREBB A COUPLE OF LOCAL HOT-SHOTS
WE'LL TALK TO THE GIRL AFTER THEY LEAVE
HANDLING BETS IS ILLEGAL TO BEGIN WITH AND FIXED BETS ARE ALL THE WORSE!
I KNOW THAT BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW TIM AND JERRY CAN FIX THAT BOWLING MATCH AT THE REGAL ALLEY TOMORROW.
WHEN THEY PUT THIS CASH AGAINST HOOK MORGAN, THEY SAID THEY'D GET TO THE ALLEY BEFORE HE DID THAT'S ALL!
THAT'S ENOUGH TOMORROW WE'LL GET TO THE ALLEY BEFORE THEY DO!
NOTHING IS SO LONESOME AS A BOWLING ALLEY IN THE MORNING! I FIGURED THAT TIM AND JERRY WERE PLAYING ON THAT FACTOR SO I GOT THERE AHEAD AND I TOOK HOOK MORGAN WITH ME!
I'M BAFFLED, SO FAR!
WE'LL GET IN THE OFFICE, HOOK, AND WATCH WHAT HAPPENS.
4

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

E HADN'T MORE THAN AN HOUR TO WAIT BEFORE OUR MEN SHOWED UP DISGUISED AS WORKMEN
GET BUSY WITH THE SAND-PAPER, JERRY, WHILE I LOOK AROUND.
THERE'S NOBODY HERE, TIM. LEND ME A HAND SO WE CAN FINISH QUICKER
THIS WILL DO. WE DON'T CARE IF HIS HOOK DOES WORK AFTER IT GETS THIS FAR!
"HOOK WILL JUST THINK HIS GAME IS OFF - AS USUAL!"
SAY, WHO ARE YOU?
THE NAME'S RADNER AND I HAVE A FRIEND WHO WANTS TO MEET YOU.
IT'S HOOK MORGAN! WE GOTTA LAM, TIM!
YES, IT'S HOOK MORGAN. AND HERE'S WHERE I PUT THE HOOK ON YOU, AGNEW!
IF IT ISN'T MY OLD BUDDY, JERRY GREBB REMEMBER ME, RAY DOZO?
NICE SOCKING, RAY!
LATER
I'VE STILL GOT MY HOOK WHEN I USE A REGULAR ALLEY!
AND YOU'LL BE IN FORM TOO RAY IF YOU DON'T LET WRONG GUYS WORK THE CHAIR TRICK ON YOU!
THAT WAS THE END OF THE BOWLING "F.B." AT LEAST IN ONE TOWN BUT WATCH FOR GUYS LIKE TEX AND JERRY. THEY'RE EVERYWHERE!
THE END

DR. NEFF

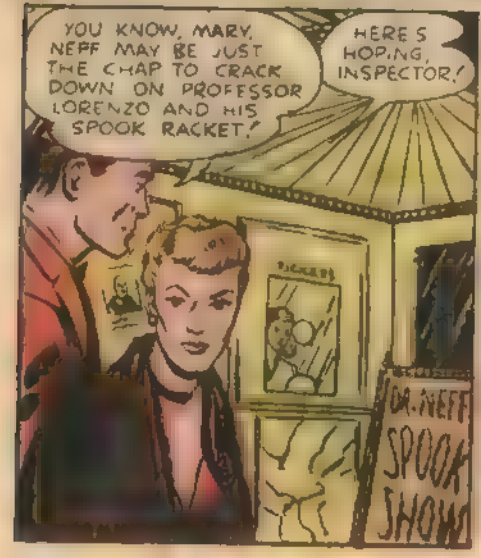
THE ORIGINAL GHOST-BREAKER

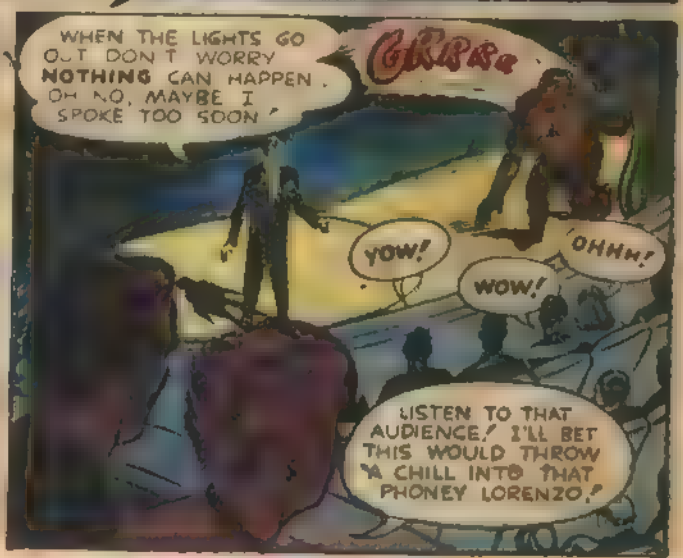
TEAMS WITH INSPECTOR O'MALLEY IN

SMASHING THE SPOOK RACKET

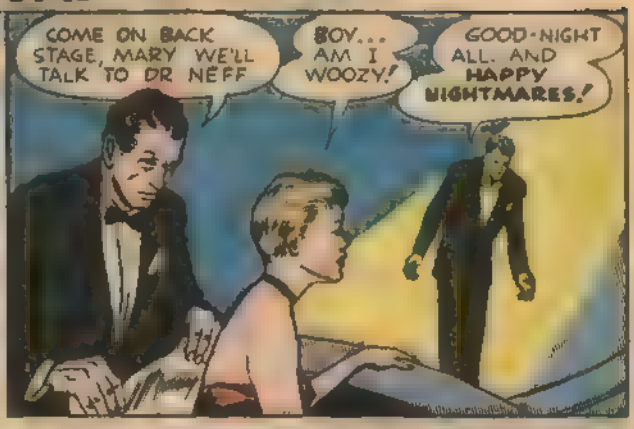
DOCTOR "BILL" NEFF

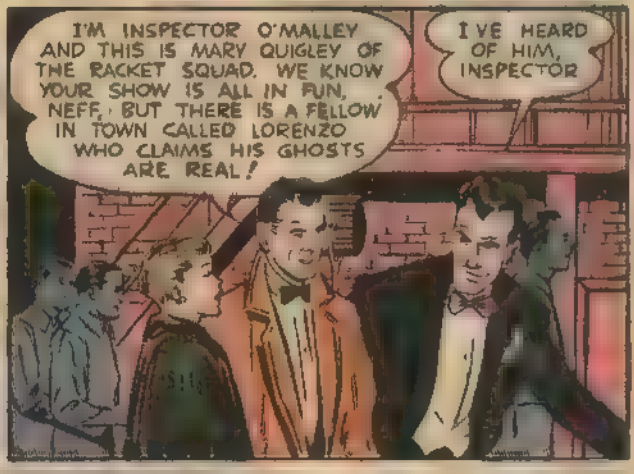
FOR YEARS, DOCTOR NEFF HAS TRAVELED FROM COAST TO COAST, THRILLING AND CHILLING THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WITH HIS COMBINATION MYSTERY AND GHOST SHOW... NOW MEET THIS ACTUAL PERSONAGE OF THE STAGE IN A FAST FICTION ADVENTURE...


YOU KNOW, MARY, NEFF MAY BE JUST THE CHAP TO CRACK DOWN ON PROFESSOR LORENZO AND HIS SPOOK RACKET!
HERE'S HOPING, INSPECTOR!
DR. NEFF SPOOK SHOW


WHEN THE LIGHTS GO OUT DON'T WORRY NOTHING CAN HAPPEN. OH NO, MAYBE I SPOKE TOO SOON!
CRASH
YOW!
OHHH!
WOW!
LISTEN TO THAT AUDIENCE! I'LL BET THIS WOULD THROW A CHILL INTO THAT PHONEY LORENZO!

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION




I'M INSPECTOR O'MALLEY AND THIS IS MARY QUIGLEY OF THE RACKET SQUAD. WE KNOW YOUR SHOW IS ALL IN FUN, NEFF, BUT THERE IS A FELLOW IN TOWN CALLED LORENZO WHO CLAIMS HIS GHOSTS ARE REAL!
I'VE HEARD OF HIM, INSPECTOR

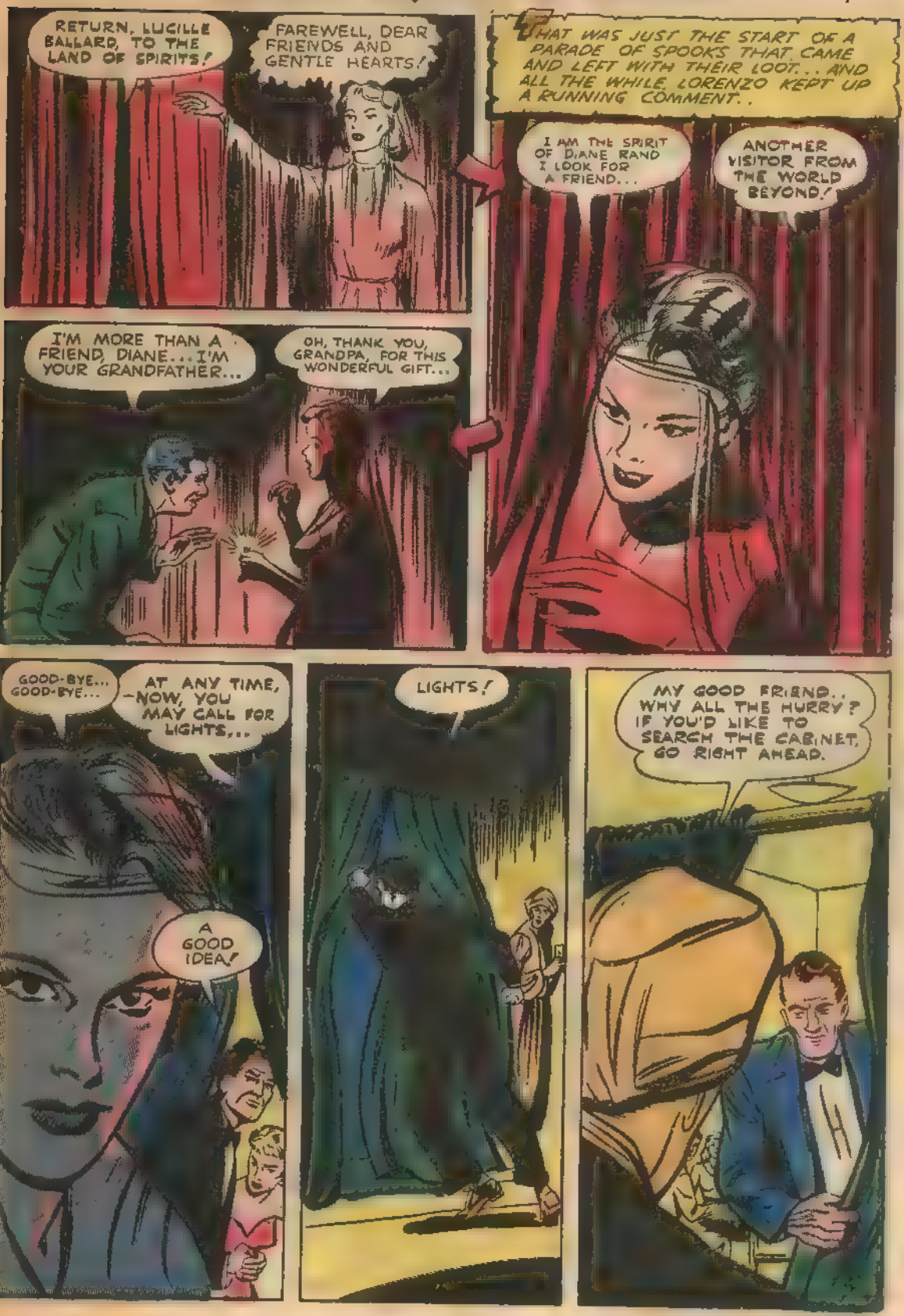
THEY SAY LORENZO'S PHONEY SPOOKS COLLECT CASH AND GEMS FROM WEALTHY SUCKERS! I'D SURE LIKE TO EXPOSE THAT FAKIR!
THAT'S WHAT WE WANT YOU TO DO, NEFF. WE'RE GOING OVER TO LORENZO'S NOW, SO JOIN US THERE LATER!

I AM PROFESSOR LORENZO, MASTER OF THE BEYOND! NOW THAT YOU HAVE SEARCHED ME AND FOUND THAT I HAVE NO SPOOKS UP MY SLEEVE, I SHALL MATERIALIZE GENUINE SPIRITS!

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

NOW SEARCH THE CURTAINS AND MAKE SURE THEY CONTAIN NO CONCEALED ASSISTANTS OR DEVICES
NOTHING HERE!
TURN OFF THE FLOOR LAMP, CLOSE THE CURTAIN, AND TAKE YOUR PLACES IN CIRCLE. HAVE YOUR GIFTS READY FOR THE SPIRITS!
LOOK AT THOSE JEWELS AND ALL THAT CASH...WAITING FOR THE SPIRITS!
I'D LIKE TO SEE THEM GET IT!
EVERYBODY HOLD HANDS WITH THE NEXT PERSON, PLEASE!
DO NOT BREAK THE HUMAN CIRCLE! NOW, ABKAR, TURN OUT THE LIGHTS OF THE SEANCE ROOM...
YES, MASTER
I AM THE SPIRIT OF LUCILLE BALLARD... I KNOW THESE JEWELS ARE A GIFT FOR ME...
YES, YES! LUCILLE, MY DEAR DEPARTED NIECE! TAKE THEM!
SOON AFTER THE LIGHTS WERE EXTINGUISHED, WEIRD THINGS HAPPENED IN THE EERIE GLOW OF RED BULBS IN FRONT OF LORENZO'S CABINET!
AND BEHOLD! A LOVELY VISITOR FROM THE WORLD BEYOND!
THAT SPOOK LOOKS REAL, INSPECTOR!
3

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION


RETURN, LUCILLE BALLARD, TO THE LAND OF SPIRITS!
FAREWELL, DEAR FRIENDS AND GENTLE HEARTS!
THAT WAS JUST THE START OF A PARADE OF SPOOKS THAT CAME AND LEFT WITH THEIR LOOT... AND ALL THE WHILE LORENZO KEPT UP A RUNNING COMMENT..
I AM THE SPIRIT OF DIANE RAND I LOOK FOR A FRIEND...
ANOTHER VISITOR FROM THE WORLD BEYOND!
I'M MORE THAN A FRIEND, DIANE... I'M YOUR GRANDFATHER...
OH, THANK YOU, GRANDPA, FOR THIS WONDERFUL GIFT...
GOOD-BYE... GOOD-BYE...
AT ANY TIME, —NOW, YOU MAY CALL FOR LIGHTS...
A GOOD IDEA!
LIGHTS!
MY GOOD FRIEND.. WHY ALL THE HURRY? IF YOU'D LIKE TO SEARCH THE CABINET, GO RIGHT AHEAD.

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

LORENZO IS TIED AS TIGHT AS EVER AND THERE'S NOT A TRACE OF THOSE SPOOKS OR THE STUFF THEY TOOK WITH THEM!
WE'D BETTER STALL UNTIL NEFF GETS HERE... THAT MUST BE NEFF NOW!
DINGG
I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE PROFESSOR'S CIRCLE...
STEP IN, SIR, THE SEANCE IS READY TO RESUME
A NEW MEMBER OF THE CIRCLE, PROFESSOR...
YOU MAY EXAMINE MY BONDS, SIR!
THEY LOOK ALL RIGHT TO ME
AS SOON AS THE LIGHTS ARE OUT, WORK CLOSER TOWARD ME.
LIGHTS OUT!
ANOTHER VISITOR FROM BEYOND.
HOLD ON, I'LL BE BACK!
OH, WONDERFUL! ALL THIS IS FOR ME...

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

AND HERE'S SOMETHING ELSE FOR YOU, PROFESSOR LORENZO!
LIGHTS!
SAY, IT IS LORENZO... WITH THE CHAIR-ARMS STILL STRAPPED TO HIM!
THAT'S RIGHT, THEY ARE DETACHABLE.
AND NOW THE SPIRIT WILL RETURN TO THE OTHER WORLD...
BUT LORENZO'S VOICE IS STILL COMING FROM THE CABINET!
THAT'S RIGHT...
...AND HERE'S THE ANSWER! A RECORD RUNNING IN THE BASE OF THE LAMP, PIPING THROUGH THE STANDARD TO AN AMPLIFIER. NOW LET'S LOOK AT THE ARMLESS ARM-CHAIR!
WHAT A GADGET. NO WONDER LORENZO COULD COME AND GO AS HE WANTED. BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PHONEY SPOOKS?
I'LL SHOW YOU!
NATURALLY, NOBODY COULD EXAMINE THE CHAIR WHILE LORENZO WAS SEATED IN IT, SO THAT'S WHERE HE HID HIS MASKS AND CHEESE-CLOTH!
AND LOOK AT THIS...
6

RACKET SQUAD IN ACTION

THE MONEY AND JEWELRY THAT THOSE OTHER "SPOOKS" TOOK! IT'S ALL THE EVIDENCE WE NEED.
WE'LL ADD THESE TO THE OTHER EXHIBITS, LORENZO. I'M TAKING YOU TO HEADQUARTERS WITH THAT HINDU ACCOMPLICE OF YOURS...
HEY! I'LL HANDLE THIS HINDU WILD-CAT... BUT SOMEBODY STOP LORENZO!
HURRY... HE'LL GET AWAY!
DON'T WORRY. I'LL STOP HIM WITH A HYPNOTIC PASS!
BUT HOW IN THE WORLD!
LORENZO TRIPPED OVER THIS ALARM WIRE THAT ABKAR PLACED HERE IN CASE THE PLACE WAS RAIDED.
I NOTICED THE WIRE AND AVOIDED IT COMING IN, BUT LORENZO FORGOT IT GOING OUT!
COME ON, PROFESSOR. YOUR SPOOKS WILL BE WAITING AT HEADQUARTERS.
THAT WAS THE FINISH OF PROFESSOR LORENZO'S SPOOK RACKET, THANKS TO DOCTOR NEFF, THE FAMOUS GHOST-BREAKER! WHEN NEFF AND HIS SHOW COME YOUR WAY, WATCH FOR THEM!!!
J. J. O'Malley
THE END

THE NUMBERS RACKET
"RUNNERS" WHO COLLECT BETS HANG AROUND SCHOOLS AND RECREATION CENTERS AND ENCOURAGE YOUNGSTERS TO BET THEIR LUNCH MONEY ON THE NUMBERS.
FRANK FROLLO
THE NUMBERS GAME – ORIGINATED IN CUBA AND BECAME ONE OF THE BIGGEST RACKETS IN THIS COUNTRY. A PARTICULARLY VICIOUS PHASE OF THE GAME IS AFFECTING THE HEALTH OF SCHOOL BOYS AND GIRLS.
ON SOME CITIES IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT CASES OF ACTUAL UNDER-NOURISHMENT DEVELOPED IN CHILDREN PLAYING THE RACKET WITH THEIR LUNCH AND MILK MONEY. DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU!

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-WARD GREEN CO., Dept. TR-9-

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MOST ANY PART OF THE BODY WITH

ELECTRIC Spot Reducer

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PLUG IN GRASP HANDLE AND APPLY

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FOR GREATEST BENEFIT IN REDUCING by massage use SPOT REDUCER with or without electricity—Also used as an aid in the relief of pains for which massage is indicated.

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When you use the Spot Reducer, it's almost like having your own private masseur at home. It's fun reducing this ways! It not only helps you reduce and keep slim—but also aids in the relief of those types of aches and pains—and tired nerves that can be helped by massage! The Spot Reducer is handsomely made of light weight aluminum and rubber and truly a beautiful invention you will be thankful you own. AC 110 volts. Underwriters Laboratory approved.

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Mail this coupon with only $1 for your Spot Reducer on approval. Pay postman $8.95 plus delivery—or send $9.95 (full price) and we ship postage prepaid. Use it for ten days in your own home. Then if not delighted return Spot Reducer for full purchase price refund. Don't delay! You have nothing to lose—except ugly, embarrassing, undesirable pounds of FAT. MAIL COUPON now!

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City..... State.....

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LOSE WEIGHT OR NO CHARGE